

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

EUR-12 COA-01 OES-03 /073 W

----- 084245

R 170500Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 701

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MUSCAT 878

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, PINS, MU

SUBJECT: VISIT OF WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT

1. JAMES HOAGLAND, WASH. POST CORRESPONDENT BASED BEIRUT, SPENT FIRST HALF DECEMBER IN OMAN GATHERING MATERIAL WHICH HE EXPECTS WILL BE USED IN SERIES OF FEATURE ARTICLES LATER THIS MONTH. HE CONDUCTED EXTENSIVE NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS IN MUSCAT, SAW PARTS OF NORTHERN OMAN AND WAS THREE DAYS IN DHOFAR. FROM WHAT HOAGLAND TOLD US, SATISFACTORY FACILITIES WERE EXTENDED HIM BY OMANGOV OFFICIALS INCLUDING PR SECTION OF MINISTRY DEFENCE.

2. WE EXPECT THAT IN ADDITION TO DISCUSSING GENERAL OMANI POLITICAL SITUATION, PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT, AND OMAN'S VIEW OF REGIONAL PROBLEMS, HOAGLAND WILL FOCUS PARTICULAR ATTENTION ON ASPECTS OF OMANI-IRANIAN COOPERATION. THOUGH HE DID NOT TOUR ACTUAL COMBAT SECTORS IN DHOFAR, HE MOTORED ALONG SALALAH-MIDWAY ROAD, SAW ONE OR TWO CIVIL DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IN CENTRAL DHOFAR, AND VISITED JABAL AND PLATEAU REGION BETWEEN SALALAH-MIDWAY ROAD AND ANTI-INFILTRATION HORNBEAM LINE INTO WHICH SULTAN'S

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ARMED FORCES IN PAST TWO MONTHS HAVE INSERTED FIRQA HOME-GUARD

MEMBERS TO ENCOURAGE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF NORMAL GRAZING AND VILLAGE LIFE. AMONG HOAGLAND'S IMPRESSIONS MENTIONED TO US WERE (A) CONSIDERABLY LARGER THAN ANTICIPATED IRANIAN PRESENCE AT MIDWAY, AND (B) PERVERSIVE PRESENCE OF BRITISH OFFICERS EVEN IN SMALLEST SAF MILITARY GROUPS ALONG HIS ROUTE. COMMANDER OF DHOFAR BRIGADE WAS PARTICULARLY GENEROUS IN TIME SPENT BRIEFING HOAGLAND AND ARRANGING HIS DHOFAR SCHEDULE.

3. JUDGING FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH US, HOAGLAND ALSO WILL FOCUS ON MOTIVES AND PROSPECTS FOR OMANI-IRANIAN COOPERATION IN GULF OF OMAN SUCH AS FISHERIES, SECURITY OF SHIPPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS.

4. UNDERSTAND HOAGLAND ALREADY FILED STORY ABOUT AMBASSADOR HELMS' RECENT VISIT TO OMAN WHICH OCCURRED DURING HIS STAY. REQUEST NEA/P POUCH EMBASSY COPIES OF IT AND OF ANTICIPATED FORTHCOMING SERIES.

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